

CLAIMS

1. A method for an interactive media services system to provide a plurality of promotional media to a user through an interactive media services client device, said client device coupled to a programmable media services server device, said method comprising steps of:
 5 implementing an interactive media guide;
 implementing said client device to present said interactive media guide to said user;
 providing a system operator with an interface to said programmable media services server; and
 10 providing control options within said interface to allow said system operator to command which of said plurality of promotional media is to be displayed in specific areas of said interactive media guide.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein said user can command said interactive media guide to request more information regarding a media title.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein said system operator has the ability to configure said programmable media services server to display a specific type of promotional media in association with said request of said user, and to display said specific type of promotional media in a specific format.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein said specific type of promotional media comprises a trailer, a preview, and a still image.
5. The method of claim 3, wherein said specific format of display comprises a segmented area of a catalog screen and a full screen display of said promotional media.

6. A method for an interactive media services system to provide a plurality of promotional media to a user through an interactive media services client device, said method comprising steps of:

5 implementing said client device to tune to one of a plurality of promotional channels;
presenting said plurality of promotional media on said promotional channel; and
accepting requests from said user to proceed to a purchase environment for one of
said plurality of promotional media currently being displayed on one of said plurality of
promotional channels.

10 7. The method of claim 6, wherein said plurality of promotional media comprises an
iterative sequence of trailers of a plurality of media.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein one of said plurality of promotional media comprises
an iterative sequence of trailers of a plurality of media associated with a particular theme or genre.

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9. A method for an interactive media services system to provide a plurality of promotional media to a user through an interactive media services client device, said method comprising steps of:

5 implementing an interactive media guide;
implementing said client device to present said interactive media guide to said user;
accepting requests from said user to present more information regarding a media title;

and

10 enabling said interactive media services system to provide one of said plurality of promotional media associated with said media title requested.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein said request of said user enables the user to view promotional media regarding said media title of interest in a segmented area of said interactive media guide.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein said promotional media is a preview presenting a small duration of a media stream of said requested media title.

12. The method of claim 10, wherein said promotional media comprises a trailer of said requested media title.

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13. A method for an interactive media services system to provide a plurality of promotional media to a user through an interactive media services client device, said method comprising steps of:

5 implementing an interactive media guide;
 implementing said client device to present said interactive media guide to said user;
 accepting requests from said user to present a media described by said interactive
media guide;
 enabling said interactive media services system to insert said plurality of promotional
10 media as a part of the progression of an entire session of said media requested.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein said plurality of promotional media comprises a sequence of trailers.

15. The method of claim 13, wherein said plurality of promotional media comprises a sequence of trailers of other media in some way associated with said media requested.

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16. A method for an interactive media services system to provide a plurality of promotional media for media not currently available to a user through an interactive media services client device, said client device coupled to a programmable media services server device, said method comprising steps of:

- implementing a memory on said client device;
- implementing said client device to present said plurality of promotional media for media not currently available; and
- accepting a request from said user to record interest in one of said plurality of promotional media for media not currently available but currently being promoted.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein said request can be stored in said memory on said client device and at a later time prompt said user when said media of said request becomes available.

18. The method of claim 16, wherein said request can be stored on said media services server and at a later time command said client device to prompt said user when said media of said request becomes available.

19. The method of claim 16, wherein said request can be fully processed as a purchase for a future time when said media currently unavailable becomes available.

20. A method for an interactive media services system to provide a plurality of preview media to a user through an interactive media services client device, said client device coupled to a programmable media services server device, said method comprising steps of:

5 providing a system operator with an interface to said programmable media services server; and

providing control options within said interface to allow said system operator to dictate which of said plurality of preview media is available to said user and the functionality available to the user before, during, and after a preview.

10 21. The method of claim 20, wherein said system operator can configure the duration of said preview and whether interactive media system prompts said user to purchase media being previewed.

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22. A method for an interactive media services system to provide a plurality of preview media to a user through an interactive media services client device, said method comprising steps of:

5 implementing an interactive media guide to be presented to said user through said client device;

accepting a request from said user to preview one of a plurality of preview media listed in said interactive media guide;

10 implementing said client device to present said plurality of preview media; and

prompting said user to purchase media associated with preview once the preview session has ended.

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23. A method for an interactive media services system to provide a screen saver utility to a user through an interactive media services client device, said client device coupled to a programmable media services server device, said method comprising steps of:

5 providing a system operator with an interface to said programmable media services server; and

providing control options within said interface to allow said system operator to dictate media to be presented in the screen saver utility, a plurality of parameters that result in activation of the screen saver utility, and a procedure to be followed in exiting the screen saver utility.

24. The method of claim 23, wherein said plurality of parameters comprise a timeout value denoting how long a client device will display a non-variant screen before activating said screen saver utility.

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25. A method for an interactive media services system to provide a screen saver utility to a user through an interactive media services client device, said client device coupled to a programmable media services server device, said method comprising steps of:

5 implementing said client device to present an interactive media guide; and
implementing said client device to activate a screen saver utility if said client device has presented a non-variant screen for longer than a plurality of configured parameters allow.

10 26. The method of claim 25, wherein said plurality of parameters comprise a timeout value denoting how long a client device will display a stop screen and a timeout value denoting how long a client device will display a non-varying screen of said interactive media guide.

27. The method of claim 25, wherein activation of said screen saver utility results in tuning said client device to a promotional channel.

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28. A method for an interactive media services system to provide a plurality of promotional media to a user through an interactive media services client device, said client device coupled to a programmable media services server device, said method comprising steps of:

5 implementing an interactive media guide to be presented to said user through said client device;

implementing a broadcast file server (BFS);

providing a system operator with an interface to said programmable media services server; and

10 prompting said system operator to configure and modify said interactive media guide viewed by said user with said plurality of promotional media.

29. The method of claim 28, wherein said plurality of promotional media could contain brand specific promotional media relevant to a plurality of service providers of said media.

30. The method of claim 28, wherein said plurality of promotional media could contain advertisement media.

31. The method of claim 28, wherein said plurality of promotional media are transmitted over said media services system to said client device from a source location of said broadcast file server.

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32. A method for an interactive media services system to provide a plurality of promotional media to a user through an interactive media services client device, said client device coupled to a programmable media services server device, said method comprising steps of:

5 implementing an interactive media guide to be presented to said user through said client device;

implementing an external data source;

providing a means by which to access said programmable media services system applications externally; and

10 providing a means by which to configure and modify said interactive media guide viewed by said user with said plurality of promotional media.

33. The method of claim 32, wherein said plurality of promotional media are retrieved by said interactive media services system from said external data source and transmitted over said interactive media services system to said client device.

34. The method of claim 33, wherein said external data source is a device that exists in the Internet and said plurality of promotional media is accessed by said interactive media services system per a Uniform Resource Locator (URL).

35. The method of claim 32, wherein said means by which to access said media services system applications externally is a set of Application Program Interfaces (APIs) through which control modules existing outside the interactive media services system can configure and modify said plurality of promotional media.

36. The method of claim 32, wherein said means by which to configure and modify said interactive media guide viewed by said user with said plurality of promotional media is accessible to an application that provides constantly changing and updated said plurality of promotional media.

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